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ABSTRACT

An evaluation was done of New York City Public Schools' Dropout Reduction through Employment, Achievement, and Motivation Program (Project DREAM), which served poor Spanish-speaking immigrant high school students. The program operated at South Bronx High School serving 444 mostly immigrant students of limited English proficiency. The program offered English as a Second Language (ESL), native language arts (NLA), and bilingual instruction in content areas. A program strength was small class size. Two guidance counselors, a case manager, and a community-based organization provided services to participants. Evaluation of the program was based on demographic data, citywide student test scores, and interviews with and surveys of the program director. Project DREAM was fully implemented; and it met its objective for NLA, career education, attendance, staff development, and parental involvement. It met one of two ESL objectives and two of three content area objectives. In addition, parental involvement was found to be low and in need of strengthening. Two appendices summarize the data collection and analysis methods and list instructional materials. (JB)

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OREA Report

Dropout Reduction through Employment
Achievement and Motivation
(Project DREAM)
Grant Number: T003A90063

1990-91

FINAL EVALUATION PROFILE

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FINAL EVALUATION PROFILE



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FOREWORD

The body of this report is preceded by an Extract which presents an overview of salient points of the project: funding cycle; enrollment figures; background of students served; admission criteria; and programming features, strengths, and limitations, including the outcome of all objectives. The extract also presents the conclusions drawn by the Office of Research, Evaluation, and Assessment (OREA) about the program and its recommendations for program improvement.

The extract is followed by the body of the report, titled Program Assessment. This includes such information as staffing, program implementation, and outcome and implementation objectives. Instructional objectives are presented first, followed by noninstructional objectives. The report then addresses those aspects of programming mandated by Title VII regulations that do not have specifically stated objectives. This may be information on attendance and dropout rate, grade retention, mainstreaming, referrals out of the program to meet special needs of the students, and withdrawals. A case history concludes the report.

Data for this profile were collected and analyzed using a variety of procedures, which are described in Appendix A following the text.

Office of Research, Evaluation, and Assessment
New York City Public Schools
E.S.E.A. Title VII Evaluation Profile
**Dropout Reduction through Employment,
Achievement, and Motivation
Project DREAM**

Grant Number: T003A90063
1990-91

EXTRACT

PROJECT DIRECTOR: Sheila Fallick

FUNDING CYCLE: Year 2 of 3

SITES

<u>School</u>	<u>Borough</u>	<u>Grade Levels</u>	<u>Enrollment*</u>	
			<i>(fall)</i>	<i>(spring)</i>
South Bronx High School	Bronx	9 - 11	414	334

*The project enrolled 444 students (1 less than in the previous year).

STUDENT BACKGROUND

<u>Native Language</u>	<u>Number of Students</u>	<u>Countries of Origin</u>	<u>Number of Students</u>
Spanish	439	Puerto Rico	121
Unreported	5	Dominican Republic	175
		Unites States	37
		Ecuador	26
		Honduras	26
		Mexico	24
		Other countries	35

Students lived in poor economic conditions and many had after-school jobs and child-care responsibilities. The previous education of project students from South America and Puerto Rico was fair; the students from Central America and the Dominican Republic had a poor educational background.

Mean Years of Education in Native Country: 6.5; in the United States: 3.5

ADMISSION CRITERIA

The project admitted students who scored at or below the 40th percentile on the Language Assessment Battery (LAB) and were therefore categorized as being of limited English proficiency (LEP). It also admitted students who opted into the program through parental authorization.

PROGRAMMING

Features

Project DREAM targeted one school with a recent influx of immigrants. The program offered English as a Second Language (E.S.L.), Native Language Arts (N.L.A.), and bilingual instruction in content areas.

Strengths and Limitations

One of the program's strengths was its small classes. In addition, two guidance counselors, a case manager, and ASPIRA--a community-based organization--, provided services to program students.

Parent involvement was low and in need of strengthening.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Project DREAM was fully implemented. The program met its objective for N.L.A., career education, attendance, staff development, and parental involvement. It met one of two E.S.L. objectives. Of the three content area objectives, the project met two and partially met the third. The self-image objective could not be evaluated for lack of data.

The conclusions, based on the findings of this evaluation, lead to the following recommendations:

- Submit data necessary for OREA to evaluate all objectives.
- Explore reasons why project students were unable to meet the E.S.L. objective for gains in language skills.
- Explore reasons why passing rates for the R.C.T. in global studies and science were low.

PROGRAM ASSESSMENT

STAFFING

Title VII (Total 6)

<u>Title</u>	<u>Degree</u>	<u>Language Competencies</u>
Project Director	M.A.	Spanish, French
Bil. Resource Teacher	M.A.	Spanish
Case Manager	M.S.	Spanish
Bil. Ed. Assistant	B.A.	Spanish
Bil. Ed. Assistant		Spanish
Bil. Ed. Assistant		Spanish

Other Staff Working With Project Students (Total 28)

<u>Degree</u>	<u>Certification</u>	<u>Language Competencies</u>
M.A. 16	E.S.L. 4	Spanish 18
B.A. 12	Mathematics 4	
	Science 1	
	Social Studies 4	
	Unreported 15	

IMPLEMENTATION AND OUTCOMES (objectives prefaced by ●)

The project used educational assistants and computers to assist instruction in all academic subjects.

English as a Second Language (E.S.L.)

<u>Level</u>	<u>Periods Weekly</u>
Beginning	15
Intermediate	15
Advanced	10
Transitional	5

For a list of textbooks see Appendix B.

- Seventy-five percent of the program students will continue to demonstrate gains in achievement in language skills (reading, writing, listening, and speaking).

Evaluation Instrument: Language Assessment Battery (LAB) *

Pretest: March 1990; posttest: March 1991.

*OREA used a gap reduction design to evaluate the effect of supplementary instruction on project students' performance on the LAB. Since all LEP students in New York City are entitled to such instruction, no valid comparison group exists among these students, and OREA used instead the group on which the LAB was normed. Test scores are reported in Normal Curve Equivalents (N.C.E.s), which are normalized standard scores with a mean of 50 and a standard deviation of 21.06. It is assumed that the norm group has a zero gain in N.C.E.s in the absence of supplementary instruction and that participating students' gains are attributable to project services.

Number of students for whom pre- and posttest data were reported: 272

Percentage of students showing gain: 67.3

Project did not meet objective.

- Seventy percent of the program students will score at the passing criterion of 65 in E.S.L. and E.S.L. reading.

Evaluation Indicator: Final course grades.

Passing Grades in E.S.L. Courses

	<u>Fall</u>		<u>Spring</u>	
	<u>Enrollment</u>	<u>Percent Passing</u>	<u>Enrollment</u>	<u>Percent Passing</u>
E.S.L.	263	79.8	294	70.1
E.S.L. Reading/Writing	311	70.1	231	74.5

Over 70 percent of students received final grades of at least 65 in E.S.L. and E.S.L. reading in both semesters.

Project met objective.

Native Language Arts (N.L.A.)

Estimated percentage of students lacking literacy skills in native language: 10

<u>Level</u>	<u>Periods Weekly</u>
Literacy	10
Beginning	5
Intermediate	5
Advanced	5
Adv. Placement	5

For a list of instructional materials used, see Appendix B.

- Seventy-five percent of the target students will demonstrate significant gains in the Spanish language skills of reading and writing.

Evaluation Instrument: Program-made test.

Number of students for whom pre- and posttest data were reported: 11

Percentage of students showing gain: 90.9

This test was only administered to those students at the literacy level.

Project met objective.

- Seventy percent of the target students will score at or above the passing criterion of 65 in Native Language Arts each semester.

Evaluation Indicator: Final course grades.

Of the 404 students enrolled in N.L.A. in the fall, 78.2 percent (316) passed. Of the 398 students enrolled in N.L.A. in the spring, 76.3 percent (304) passed.

Project met objective.

Content Area Subjects

Courses in mathematics, science, and social studies were taught in the students' native language. Program students had particular difficulty with social studies due to their lack of reading skills.

- Students participating in the program will score at or above the passing criterion of 65 in bilingual mathematics, science, and social studies classes at a rate that is equal to that of non-program students in comparable mainstream classes.

Evaluation Indicator: Final course grades.

Passing Grades in Content Area Subjects

	<u>Project Students</u>		<u>Mainstream Students</u>
	<u>Number</u>	<u>Percentage</u>	<u>Percentage</u>
Mathematics	225	70.1	49.1
Science	230	76.1	51.8
Social studies	276	73.9	58.3

Project met objective.

- The percentage of target students passing the Regents examinations in Sequential Mathematics and Biology will be equal to that of mainstream students.

Evaluation Instrument: New York State Regents examination scores.

Of the 24 program students taking the Sequential Mathematics I Regents examination, 100 percent passed. Of the 14 mainstream students taking the exam, four (28.6 percent) passed. No project students took the Biology Regents examination this year.

Project met objective.

- The percentage of target students passing the Regents Competency Tests (R.C.T.s) in reading, writing, mathematics, science, and global history will be equal to that of mainstream students.

Evaluation Instrument: Regents Competency Test results.

Passing Grades on Regents Competency Tests

	<u>Project Students</u>		<u>Mainstream Students</u>	
	<u>Number</u>	<u>Percent Passing</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Percent Passing</u>
R.C.T. Mathematics	112	60.7	101	54.4
R.C.T. Science	55	41.8	112	42.8
R.C.T. Global Studies	64	39.0	44	56.8
R.C.T. U.S. History	30	96.7	42	83.3

The percentage of project students who passed the R.C.T. in mathematics and U.S. History exceeded that of percentage of mainstream students. The percentages of project and mainstream students who passed the R.C.T. in science were very similar. However, a greater percentage of mainstream than project students passed the R.C.T. in global studies.

Project partially met objective.

Attendance

- Students in the program will maintain a higher rate of attendance than that of mainstream students.

The attendance rate for project students was 89.2 percent; that for mainstream students was 80.8 percent. The rate for project students was higher.

Project met objective.

Dropout

Eleven project students (2.5 percent) dropped out. The project does not call for an objective for dropout rate until 1992.

Self-Image

- Seventy percent of the program students will develop a more positive self-image.

Evaluation Instrument: School Attitude Measure.

The project submitted to OREA an analysis which had been performed by a third party, and which determined that project students showed statistically significant improvement in five dimensions of self-image. The analysis did not indicate, however, what percentage of students demonstrated improvement.

OREA could not evaluate objective.

Career Education

- Students will set attainable goals for their future through career education infusion in E.S.L. classes and guidance sessions with the case manager.

Individual and group sessions on career goals were offered by the case manager. Teachers in the E.S.L. department also offered career education counseling in their classes. It was a part of the curriculum to discuss career goals in the class.

Project met objective.

Staff Development

- All staff members will be fully trained in educational aspects related to E.S.L., bilingual education, native language arts, and bilingual content areas through college courses, workshops, seminars, and conferences.

All project staff attended monthly faculty and departmental meetings and a full day staff development workshop on "Instructional Strategies Used with LEP Students." Various staff also attended E.S.L. and United Federation of Teachers (UFT)-sponsored conferences, the Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL) convention, and the bilingual education staff development program. Eight program teachers enrolled in college courses during the school year.

Project met objective.

Parental Involvement

- Parents of target students will establish regular contact with the school and the bilingual program through the services of the case manager and an educational assistant.

The case manager and educational assistant regularly phoned and wrote to project parents to discuss students' attendance and academic progress and to give information about the program. The family assistant also made regular home visits to project students.

Project met objective.

- Parents will be fully informed of the relevant aspects of the New York City school system, requirements for graduation, and the bilingual program through meetings and telephone calls.

The bimonthly newsletter prepared by the resource teacher provided information to parents concerning the school and the New York City Public Schools system. During the spring semester parents attended monthly Parents' Association meetings, which included workshops on relevant topics.

Project met objective.

- Parents of the target students will participate in the Bilingual Advisory Committee.

Seven parents participated on the Bilingual Advisory Committee, which met twice during the year.

Project met objective.

- A course in English as a Second Language will be offered to parents of program students.

Another Title VII program offered E.S.L. classes in which Project DREAM parents participated.

Project met objective.

- A parent support group for parents of program students will be established by the case manager. The group will hold monthly meetings on a specific topic.

A parent support group was formed. Monthly meetings were held following the Parents' Association meetings, and a variety of topics such as coping strategies, day care, and education were discussed.

Project met objective.

- A one-page bimonthly parent newsletter will be sent to parents of program students keeping them informed of all program and school activities.

A bimonthly parent newsletter was prepared and sent to parents of students in the program.

Project met objective.

Other Activities

The Technical Assistance Center (TAC) in the Bronx provided ten project students with computers to take home. The project selected recipients on the basis of their test grades, homework, attendance, and reliability. The students were required to write an autobiography, a family history, family biographies, and other assignments related to their background and culture. Parents were encouraged to use the computer at home.

Student achievements included:

1. E.S.L. Spelling Bee, 1990, 2nd Place
2. Physical Fitness Awards
3. Science Fair, 1991, 1st Place
4. Appearances on talent shows and bilingual program shows
5. Participation in Spanish and E.S.L. Spelling Bees
6. Articles in "El Vocero Bilingüe" (Bilingual Program Newsletter).

STUDENTS WITH SPECIAL ACADEMIC NEEDS

Referral to special education was considered a last resort. The first step was usually to speak to the students' parents. Case conferences attended by the project director, case manager, and guidance counselors, were held biweekly to discuss these students. Students were observed and progress reports kept. If special education was deemed necessary, a referral would be made to the School-Based Support Team (S.B.S.T.) by the guidance counselor. The S.B.S.T. included Spanish-speaking members.

	<u>Number of Students</u>	<u>Percentage</u>
Referred to special education:	0	0
Referred to remedial programs:	0	0
Referred to gifted and talented programs:	0	0
Retained in grade:	57	12.6

MAINSTREAMING

Seventeen students (3.8 percent of participants) were mainstreamed.

CASE HISTORY

I. was an eleventh-grade student in the program. She was 20 years old and had come to the United States from Mexico in September 1989. She had not attended school in Mexico for four years before emigrating because she had to care for her younger brothers and sisters. She had no knowledge of English when she entered Project DREAM but had progressed rapidly. She was an honor student and had the highest average in the tenth and eleventh grades, bilingual or mainstream.

APPENDIX A

DATA COLLECTION AND ANALYSIS

Student Data Form

This one-page form is filled out by staff for each participating and mainstreamed student. OREA gathers data from this form on backgrounds, demographics, academic outcomes, attendance, referrals, and exit from the program.

Project Director's Questionnaire

The Project Director's Questionnaire includes questions on staff qualifications, program implementation, periods of instruction, and instructional materials and techniques.

Project Director's Interview

The interview gathers information on program and student or staff characteristics not supplied by the Project Director's Questionnaire. The interview also allows project staff to offer qualitative data or amplify responses to the Questionnaire.

Citywide Test Scores

OREA retrieves scores centrally from the Language Assessment Battery (LAB) and other citywide tests. For evaluation purposes, these test scores are reported in Normal Curve Equivalents (N.C.E.s). N.C.E.s are normalized standard scores with a mean of 50 and a standard deviation (s.d.) of 21.06. They constitute an equal-interval scale in which the distance is the same between any two adjacent scores. A gain of 5 N.C.E.s is the same whether it is at the lower or the higher end of the scale. N.C.E.s can be used in arithmetic computations to indicate group progress. (Percentile scales, although more familiar to many, are unsuitable for such computations since they are not equal-interval.)

Likert-Type Surveys

Likert-type surveys, in which respondents mark their opinions on a scale from one to five, are used in a variety of ways. They examine student attitudes (i.e., toward school and career, native language use, and native and mainstream cultures). They also assess staff and parent attitude and reactions to workshops and other activities.

Gap Reduction Evaluation Design

OREA uses a gap reduction design for measuring changes in standardized tests. Since no appropriate non-project comparison group is available in New York City, where all students of limited English proficiency (LEP) are entitled to receive supplementary services, OREA compares the progress of participating students with that of the group on which the test was normed. It is assumed that the norm group would show a zero gain in the absence of instruction, and gains made by project students could be attributed to project services. (See "Citywide Test Scores" above.)

To test whether pre/posttest gains are greater than could be expected by chance alone, OREA uses a t-test. To determine whether a difference between two proportions (e.g., program and mainstream attendance rates) is greater than could be expected by chance, OREA uses a z-test. The level of significance is set at .05 for all tests.

APPENDIX B

Instructional Materials

E.S.L.

Pathways to English, Books 1-4 - McGraw-Hill
Pathways to English, Workbooks 1-4 - McGraw-Hill
Gallery - Oxford University Press
Line by Line - Prentice Hall
Longman Structural Readers - Longman, Inc.
In The Beginning - Prentice Hall
A Christmas Carol - Oxford Press
The Adventures of Sherlock Holmes - Oxford Press
Cloze Connections - Barnell Loft, Ltd.
Easy Reading Selections in English - Prentice Hall
Moby Dick - Prentice Hall
The Good Earth - Oxford Press
Murders in the Rue Morgue - Prentice Hall

N.L.A.

Así Escribimos - National Textbook Company
Asuntos Personales South-Western Publishing Company
Bodas de Sangre Ediciones Catedras
El Cuento Holt, Rinehart and Winston, Inc.
Español a Sentirlo McGraw-Hill, Inc.
Ficciones - Emece
Fiesta al Noreste - Ediciones Destino
Galeria Hispánica - McGraw-Hill, Inc.
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Mejora Tu Español - Regents Publishing Company, Inc.
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Pasajes - Random House, Inc.
Por Fronteras Culturales - Amsco School Publications
Prácticas de Oficina - South-Western Publishing Company
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Workbook in Spanish (Three Years) - Amsco School Publications, Inc.